

ACCOUNT of the most audacious ROBBERY and inhuman MURDERS, committed by a Gang of Footpads, on the Person and Family of the Rev. Dr. MARTIN.

IT having been found, that among the numerous Convicts discharged from the Ballast-Lighters on the Thames, very few have been reclaimed, but that during their Bondage having instructed each other in the Modes of committing every Species of Fraud and Robbery, they are no sooner liberated, than, getting into London, they put their villainous Schemes into Execution. By these Means, the Streets of the Metropolis and its Neighbourhood are now become so much infested with every Sort of Villains, that it has been found necessary for a Military Association of its Inhabitants to patrol the Highways, to secure the Lives and Properties of their Fellow-Citizens from the Attacks of those Desperadoes. Notwithstanding this and many other Precautions, the Felons now in Newgate amount to more than 300, whose riotous Behaviour keeps the Governor and his Servants in constant Alarm ; and the worst Consequences being dreaded from their breaking out, a strong Body of the Military Association are constantly on Guard at that Prison. Nor is this all ; the Fear of further Injuries prevails, as it is known, that near 170 Convicts will complete their Servitude on the Thames within a few Weeks. Experience having thus proved the Ballast-Hulks to be rather Seminaries of Vice, than Schools of Reformation, Government, it is said, will in future transport Offenders to the burning Sands and deadly Swamps of Africa, for the usual Terms of Banishment to America.

Amongst the several audacious Robberies and inhuman Murders lately committed, none seems to have been accompanied with Circumstances more shocking than the following.

Late on Wednesday Evening, September the 4th, 1782, as the Rev. Dr. Martin, his Lady, and three Children, were returning to London, they were stopped on Finchley Common by a Gang of 8 or 9 Footpads, armed with Pistols and Cutlasses, who robbed the Doctor and his Lady of their Watches, Money, and even their Shoe-Buckles. They behaved with the utmost Rudeness and Brutality. On their first Approach, the Footman rode up to them with a loaded Pistol, but was shot dead on the Spot. The Doctor, terrified by the Murder of his Servant, could not readily deliver his Property ; whereupon he received a terrible Wound on his Knee with one of their Cutlasses. The Blood issuing abundantly frightened the youngest Child, a Girl about 4 Years old, who shrieked most violently ; on which one of the Villains with the most horrid Imprecations fired his Pistol, and lodged a Number of Slugs in the Child's Head. The wounded Innocent did not immediately expire, but languished for three Hours in the severest Tortures. The Doctor and his Lady have been distracted ever since ; and the Life of the latter is despaired of. The utmost Industry has been used to discover the Murderers, but hitherto without Effect.

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